

DD/A Registry

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DD/A REGISTRY

FILE: Personnel

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Personnel

FROM : Don I. Wortman
Deputy Director for Administration

SUBJECT : NAPA Project Group Report

As previously requested, my comments regarding recommendations I through AA of the NAPA Project Group are set forth below. Overall, I am in agreement with the Group's recommendations with the following exceptions. My comments on these items are keyed to the Report tabs.

Tab I

I concur with each of these recommendations. I would like to expand Recommendation D to include a provision that the Task Force also look into ways and means of making the CTP more useful to the entire Agency without endangering its primary DO thrust.

Tab J

I am in agreement with Recommendations A, D, E, F, G, H, and I. However, I am in total disagreement with B and C. Preparation of the report required in this recommendation would be an extremely burdensome task consuming enormous amounts of manpower and with no beneficial effort. If the positions are to be filled internally, there is no purpose for individuals to apply. If an individual is seriously considering changing career sub-groups, then there are already a number of ways in which this interest may be pursued.

Tab N

These recommendations appear to be predicated on the concept that there is a precise, measurable means of determining who is or is not a "journeyman" when, in fact, there is no such means for many DDA careerists.

The journeyman concept has historically been applied to trade or craft occupations where measurable technical plateaus are present. In this directorate, certain employees in the Offices of Communications, Logistics, and Data Processing would fall into these technical or trade occupational categories. However, most careerists in the other offices are not in such narrow specialties; instead, they are generalists by definition. For these individuals, there is no single measurable way to determine skill level for promotion. This is when the competitive evaluation process, where factors in addition to skill level achieved are considered, is of considerable value.

Tab O

I concur in recommendation A. However, there appears to be an inconsistency between A and B. If the career Sub-group Head does, in fact, have the authority to approve promotions, then why should the Deputy Director have to "approve exceptions," made by the Sub-group Head, to the Panel's recommendations. In lieu of recommendation B, I suggest that "Heads of Career Sub-groups or Services will approve promotions based on the recommendations of the advisory panels. Any exceptions to the panel recommendations must be fully documented and returned to the appropriate panel for its information."

Tab P

I concur with recommendations A and D; however, I believe the NAPA Group overlooked another function of the Panels and, accordingly, failed to perceive the various purposes served by the assignment of descriptors. In fact, the assignment of descriptors forces the panels to look at each careerist annually; to evaluate how well he is doing; his readiness or ability to accept greater responsibilities; his weaknesses; and his standing in relation to his peers. This process thus provides the basis for career counseling for the careerist who wants to know where he stands. Such information could not be provided by the individual's supervisor who would not know how well (or poorly) the careerist's peers in another section or branch were doing.

In addition, it is also a function of the panel to identify low performers as well as those with strong potential. The use of descriptors is the means to accomplish this function.

Accordingly, I recommend that recommendation B be amended to reflect the third function of a panel, i.e. to identify weak performers. I further recommend that recommendation C be disapproved. If confusion exists regarding the various categories, then I suggest that the descriptor definitions be revised as appropriate.

Tab U

I do not concur with these recommendations. I believe that identification of the lower 3 percent forces management to look at problem cases and to take either remedial or other actions as appropriate. However, instead of using a flat numerical basis of 3 percent, I believe the rule should apply to "low performers", i.e. those ranked LP or SS. As Head of a Career Service, I am concerned with problem cases in my directorate and want to ensure that such cases are identified and that appropriate action is taken.

Tab X

I do not believe that I can comment on these recommendations as stated. The issues addressed and the terminology used are too vague and imprecise. However, the bottom line in judging the effectiveness of an office's personnel management program is its ability to perform its mission--having the right person in the right place at the right time. The judgment required to determine this is thus based on the effectiveness of its personnel and how well they perform their duties.

Tab Y

I concur with this recommendation. However, to be meaningful, considerable effort must be taken in advance to clarify ^{PRECISELY} previously what is a "personnel cost."

/s/ C. D. May

[Signature] Don I. Wortman

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Addendum to DDA NAPA Comments

Tab L

Regarding recommendation (c), I believe the use of Agency-wide vacancy notices for all GS-08 and above positions would be an excellent plan. However, I question the caveat "that a career service may not declare a secretarial/clerical job vacant when it has an unassigned qualified employee of equivalent grade." Instead, I would suggest that "may not" be changed to read "need not." The NAPA Group wording implies that the unassigned qualified employee must be assigned to the vacant position. This is not always practicable or desirable. The use of the words "need not" would allow the career service to take whichever action they believe proper.